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ULRICH GAIER

Helena, Then Hell: *Faust* as Review and Anticipation of Modern Times

GOETHE IS USUALLY NOT RECOGNIZED as an historian although, with *Dichtung und Wahrheit* and with *Geschichte der Farbenlehre*, he wrote eminent works of history that far exceed the compass of an autobiography or the chronology of a special branch of optics. When he tried to talk his friend Zelter into writing a history of music, Goethe wrote in 1815: “müßtest Du bei einer bedeutenden Periode anfangen, und vor- und rückwärts arbeiten; das Wahre kann bloß durch seine Geschichte erhoben und erhalten, das Falsche bloß durch seine Geschichte erniedrigt und zerstreut werden.”¹ In a number of his plays, he uses Herder’s theory of intertextuality *Vom neuern Gebrauch der Mythologie*,² taking up figures, stories, and problems of the sixteenth century like *Götz von Berlichingen*, *Egmont*, *Tasso*, and *Faust*, and finishing with the passionate cry for a future in which the problems that cause Götz’, Egmont’s, Gretchen’s death or Tasso’s isolation are solved. These, then, are the questions that the contemporary recipient has to ask himself: would these figures be able to live according to their “prätendierte Freiheit”³ today? This approach is eminently historical but not in the sense that a historian of the time like Gatterer or Schlözer would have acknowledged as historiography. Goethe consciously establishes a systemic correlation for instance between the introduction of Roman Law and the abolition of the traditional privileges of knighthood in Götz’ time, and the burning question of the 1770s whether a general book of law should be introduced or whether regional traditions of jurisdiction should be preserved.⁴ History, here, is not any more *magistra vitae* but a critique of present times, and present times, inversely, create an understanding for the relevance of historical events and processes: between the contemporary recipient and history, Goethe establishes an organic system of reciprocation that, as a structure, he holds up until his last years. He adopted the approach of conceiving organic systems from Johann Gottfried Herder who in turn had dynamized Johann Heinrich Lambert’s “Systematology” of 1764 for his philosophy of language and culture.⁵ I will show in this paper that Goethe used this systems approach not only for history but for his theory of colors, for aesthetics, poetry, and even in politics. *Faust*, as an eminent work of history, and in it, 3,000 years old, Helena, will provide a frame for some excursions into the systems aspect of the other fields just mentioned.

Faust, Part One

In order to make the historical character of his text ostentatious for a recipient interested in sequences and continuities of this apparently incoherent work, Goethe inserted a series of what I call “historische Markierungen,” chronotextual markers, into *Faust*. They open up an historical reading of part one that leads from Faust’s lifetime in the fifteenth/sixteenth century to the year 1800, and from around 1800 to 1830 in part two. This makes the development from Faust the blundering magician in the scene “Night” to Faust the “super-criminal” (as Wilhelm Böhm said⁶) plausible, constitutes Faust not as a character but as a principle, and invites us to read the various stages of this figure’s development as metaphorical or exemplary representations of European history from around 1500 to 1830. In my commentary, I have listed the historical markers such as Nostradamus for the sixteenth century, the hot-air balloon of the brothers Montgolfier for 1783, a periodical called *Genius der Zeit* until 1800 for an exact date of the last scenes of part one. In *Faust II*, each act is dated as well—you will remember Lord Byron’s death in 1824 in act 3 or the big dyke project in act 5 referring to the construction of Bremerhaven in 1827.⁷

Many lines could be followed through this period, such as the history of religious concepts, or the history of magic as Goethe observed those processes until his death. In this paper, I propose to deal with the principle of beauty called Helena which Faust insatiably searches for and deconstructs until the end of act 3 in part two. Goethe can well be trusted when he says: “Helena ist eine meiner ältesten Konzeptionen, gleichzeitig mit Faust.”⁸ Indeed, already the *Historia von D. Johann Fausten* of 1587 makes Faust conjure Helena at the request of his students, fall in love with her and keep her as his concubine with whom he has a son, just as Goethe’s Faust and Helena have. But if Helena was conceived about 1769 like Faust, why doesn’t she appear in part one? Evidently, Goethe speaks of a concept of Helena—just to conjure her from Hades, as Faust the old magician does, does not amount to a “concept.” When, in act 1 of part two, the emperor urges Faust to conjure Helena for him, Mephistopheles refuses to help because the Christian devil has no jurisdiction in the Hades of the old Greeks: the most beautiful woman of antique mythology, the Greek idea of beauty is not at the disposal of a Christian mythological power. But the Helena concept is present in *Faust I*, represented by the word “schön,” beautiful, which Goethe uses in a conscious and nearly terminological manner to introduce Faust’s and the recipient’s mind and senses to an original, non-Christian experience of beauty that, according to Winckelmann, Herder, Schiller, and Hölderlin, the Greeks from Homer onward embodied in Helena, and that Plato and his followers Plotinus, Proklos, and Ficino saw as the common goal of all forms and levels of erotic search.

Now, “schön” appears first in Faust’s use (and Goethe inserts it only in the final version where he was concerned about consistency) when he terms “schönstes Glück,” most beautiful blessing, his experience of the visions he had of the harmonious cosmos and the energetic earth spirit. “Schön” here is like “blessing, luck, happiness” a term for the highest exaltation of Faust’s

whole being because his spiritual magic produced a bodily and mental apotheosis which he cannot sustain, magical greenhorn that he proves to be. But we see that, with this tradition of magic from antiquity, the experience of human totality, body and spirit, sensual and mental energies in vivid interplay is suddenly achieved and produces a god-like feeling (614–22). Faust, as we know, must learn that he is not a god nor a super-man, but human like all those townspeople who enjoy the advent of spring on Easter Sunday. And here, he uses “schön” for a second time. Unhappy about the helplessness of traditional medicine, he breaks off the learned dialogue with his assistant Wagner and says:

Doch laß uns dieser Stunde schönes Gut
Durch solchen Trübsinn nicht verkümmern!
Betrachte wie in Abendsonne-Glut
Die grünumgebenen Hütten schimmern.⁹

Here, we have the first appearance of Goethe’s theory of colors according to which green and purple are complementary colors and postulate each other so that the eye automatically produces the missing complement when only one of them is observed. The purple sun on the shacks either makes the eye produce the missing green as a sort of halo, or makes the eye intensify the green color of vegetation around the shacks.¹⁰ The effect of this operation is that the shacks glimmer, that is, produce the impression of white light to which, according to Goethe, the complementary colors are united or, more precisely, reduced. Pure light is the origin of all colors which are produced by turbid media through which the light has to go, like here when the sun is low. This sight, to Faust, is “schönes Gut,” a beautiful good that has to be considered, looked at and meditated upon, because the eye, by creating the missing complementary color, becomes an organic function not of Faust but of the total organism of the cosmos of which Faust and his eye are systemic parts. By its automatic complementary production of a green color that does not exist for a physical instrument, the eye proves its sun-like nature of which Goethe wrote in his *Theory of Colors* in 1810:

Wär nicht das Auge sonnenhaft,
Wie könnten wir das Licht erblicken?
Lebt nicht in uns des Gottes eigne Kraft,
Wie könnt uns Göttliches entzücken?¹¹

And Plotinus, to whom Goethe refers with these verses, continues: “nor could the soul behold beauty if it were not beautiful in itself.”¹² So, if Faust’s eye completes the color circle with the green halo complementing the purple of the shacks, it produces the totality of pure light that is the form in which divinity manifests itself—the divine, here, being constituted by organic cooperation of Faust and the sun, subject and object suspended in one organism. This is where “schönes Gut,” beautiful good emerges, and it is certainly Goethe’s purpose to use “beautiful” and “good” in his expression because it reminds of *καλοκαγαθία*, the Greek formula for a beautiful and good body and soul, physical and mental perfection and totality. This is also Herder’s and Goethe’s key example for their systems approach to nature, and for Goethe’s

systematological definition of complete and original beauty which Faust will strive for under the name of Helena. The construction of sensual reality which the eye performs in adding the complementary color, can be observed in selective constructions of the ear when, in the scene *Dome*, Gretchen perceives from the “*Dies irae*” sequence sung by the choir only what she is afraid to hear (and what the recipient is restricted to, as well), and when, in another instance, Faust hears a non-Christian version of the Easter Play at the end of the first scene “Night.”

I took rather long to unfold this seemingly unimportant passage of four lines, but it is the starting point of a bundle of threads that lead through *Faust*. First, Faust focuses his erotic search on the pure light of the sun which he wants to follow permanently; he desires bodily wings and, in order to make his erotic flight real, he calls for the demons whereupon Mephistopheles the technician offers himself for a companion. Second, this erotic search proves to be the search for beauty, that is, finally for Helena. Third, the occasion when Goethe lets Faust experience beauty in natural simplicity and body-spirit totality, is the spring morning when the townspeople, celebrating Christ’s resurrection in open nature, celebrate their own resurrection from the Middle Ages, from the oppressive and repressive narrowness of a way of life full of restrictions and a way of thinking full of taboos on senses and body. Fourth, the chronotextual markers locate this emancipation into nature and natural humanity in the seventeenth century—the markers are Faust’s dissatisfaction with traditional alchemy and the development of a natural science on an empirical basis, observation of nature and attempts to make technical use of natural powers even if the devil is in them, finally two songs which can be dated stylistically to the seventeenth century. All this is the historical context for a new experience of sensual beauty—think of Rubens—and for the discovery of a new image of man exempted from the strictures and sanctions of state and church.

Goethe inserted this scene of emancipation and resurrection, of the rediscovery and renaissance—even at the risk of calling upon the devil—of empirical reality, sensual beauty, nature and humanity into his *Faust* project between 1798 and 1801, and with all the aspects we touched upon he proved his interest in a complete picture of social, mental, scientific, aesthetic, and literary developments of which Faust is the exponent or, as Goethe termed it since 1797, a symbolic and eminent case.¹³ This is his method, too, in the following scenes where I can only hint at the development regarding beauty. In “Study I,” Faust is lulled to sleep by Mephistopheles’ demons who, in an anacreontic song, feed him with the illusion of the fulfilment of all the wishes and longings we heard from him so far. It is especially the wish for beauty that the demons cater to, but now we observe that they divide it into “*die schönen Bilder*,” beautiful pictures that appeal to all senses and a sexually aroused body (1440–44), and into “*Himmlischer Söhne Geistige Schöne*,” the spiritual beauty of celestial descendants (1457–58) referring to the angels he heard singing in the first scene. Angry about the devil’s escape while he was dreaming of sensual and spiritual beauty, Faust crushes the beautiful world, as the demons sing, by his curse, and bans all satisfaction with beauty by his pact condition with Mephistopheles:

Werd' ich zum Augenblicke sagen:
 Verweile doch! du bist so schön!
 Dann magst du mich in Fesseln schlagen,
 Dann will ich gern zu Grunde gehn.¹⁴

The German "Augenblick" indicates a moment in time and therefore means a complete satisfaction with the situation in which the speaker is; this corresponds exactly to the source of this quotation, Rousseau's *Rêveries du promeneur solitaire* where he defines complete happiness by the wish: "Je voudrais que cet instant durât toujours!"—might this moment last forever!¹⁵ But the German "Augenblick" for "instant" exceeds the temporal connotation by the verbatim significance of "glimpse, look, or glance." Faust, with his translation of Rousseau's formula, expressly includes sensual beauty into all things that he will never be satisfied with. It is not that he condemns beauty, but Mephistopheles may kill him if he is satiated with a beautiful object and gives up his search for ever higher and ideal beauty. This is the program for Margarete's death and the search for Helena.

In the scene "Witch's Kitchen," the separation of bodily and spiritual beauty which we observed is perfect. Faust looks into a magic mirror and is ravished:

Das schönste Bild von einem Weibe!
 Ist's möglich, ist das Weib so schön?
 Muß ich an diesem hingestreckten Leibe
 Den Inbegriff von allen Himmeln sehn?
 So etwas findet sich auf Erden?¹⁶

Mephistopheles explains: when a God works for six days and congratulates himself in the end, the result must be reasonably good (2441–43). Now God did not take six days to create a woman, but the world—what Faust sees is not Helena nor Eve, but, conforming to the medieval witch's kitchen, Dame World, the medieval representation of the world by a dangerously alluring woman. So, when he speaks of "the epitome of all heavens," the German "Inbegriff von allen Himmeln" allows also the translation: "what is surrounded by all skies," that is, the sensual beauty of the world. But this promise of a perfect spiritual and sensual beauty which arouses Faust's rapture is marred by two facts: Mephistopheles will not procure the woman Faust sees in the mirror, but just "so ein Schätzchen," such a darling, that is, just any similar girl. Moreover, Faust is rejuvenated by a potion that the witch produces to reduce his outward appearance by thirty years and to boost his sexual desire to a degree which Mephistopheles describes with the following words: "Du siehst, mit diesem Trank im Leibe, Bald Helenen in jedem Weibe."¹⁷ So, the ignited sexual drive deceives Faust's sense of beauty which we have seen as a veneration of the beauty of the world and which now, under the guise of adoration of Helena, is nothing more than simple greed, the license to use and exploit Margarete, analogous to the license of the Europeans not to adore the beauty of the world, but to use and exploit nature and its enslaved inhabitants in their colonies and trading companies. Bad omen for Margarete or, with her second stage name, Gretchen! In addition to Faust's erotic

adventures with the world through mirror and potion, “Witch’s Kitchen” is an allegory of the developments leading up to the French Revolution, and the flame which pops up when Faust drinks the potion, marks the outbreak of an event that toppled the traditional order of European societies. Goethe, who had foreseen this since 1785 and was nearly driven mad by the prospect, uses the double magic of mirror and potion also to satirize the drifting apart of idealism and materialism, of the heavenly beauty of the propaganda for liberty, equality, and fraternity, and the indiscriminate drive for the biggest possible chunk of wealth taken away from the classes overthrown by the revolution.

Again, bad omen for Margarete/Gretchen. The double stage name used in different scenes indicates that Faust projects his split eros and sense for beauty on this girl who is not much older than 14 years, that he wants her to be an angel and a whore. His second word when he addresses her in the street is “schön,” my beautiful young lady. And when she makes off he repeats to himself: “Beim Himmel, dieses Kind ist schön!”¹⁸ So, Margarete is, according to Mephisto’s prophesy, Helena for Faust in this moment of sexual desire, and this is what he unmistakably signals to Mephistopheles: he must have this girl immediately. But in her room, the angel prevails again in Faust’s religious adoration of her belongings. This double projection, evidently, must overcharge and kill Margarete. She is only a Proto-Helena, a stepping-stone cracked in two for a Faust who now begins to search for Helena, that is, for an illusion of the poets, a mythological figure that never existed in the real world and cannot exist in Faust’s world. As we saw, the end of part one is dated 1800 by a chronotextual marker: so it is the tendency of transcendental idealistic philosophy, Kant, Fichte, Schelling, later Hegel, that Goethe satirizes as far as it forgets the real world, looses it out of sight or declares that it is but a mental construct, while at the same time Walpurgisnacht, the epitome of the real world, is being celebrated and nearly lures the dumbfounded Faust into forgetting himself and the pact for unhappiness and restlessness that ties him to Mephistopheles.

Napoleon: Systems Approach to Politics

Goethe’s occupation with *Faust* is interrupted after the completion of *Part One* in 1806: If *Faust* is a work of history and had been carried up to the immediate presence at the end of *Part One*, Goethe had to step back for some time in order to gain an overview of the new epoch especially when it was as turbulent as the beginning of the nineteenth century was. What we have discussed so far were, except for “Witch’s Kitchen” written in 1790, scenes conceived, or at least finished in the period between 1797 and 1806; in that year, Goethe sent *Faust I* to the publisher Cotta who, due to the Napoleonic wars, printed it only in 1808. We must not forget that the two decades from 1792 to 1812/13 were years of war, first the coalition powers attacked the new French state, then, under the general, consul, finally emperor Napoleon Bonaparte, France struck back. He conquered the European continent and even reached for Egypt in order to contain the British expansion in the Mediterranean sea, not to speak about the ongoing

confrontation in the Americas. Like everybody, Goethe was fascinated by Napoleon, this “höchste Erscheinung, die in der Geschichte möglich war,” and comments: “Man verleugnet sich das Ungeheure, so lange man kann, und verwehrt sich die richtige Einsicht des einzelnen, wo es zusammengesetzt ist. Wenn man aber diesen Kaiser und seine Umgebung mit Naivität beschreiben hört, so sieht man freilich, daß nichts dergleichen war und vielleicht auch nicht sein wird.”¹⁹ Goethe was evidently flattered when, at Erfurt and Weimar in 1808, this “Kompendium der Weltgeschichte”²⁰ received him and talked to him for a whole hour. He was flattered when he learned that Napoleon had read *Werthers Leiden* seven times and wanted to discuss one specific inconsistency with him, demonstrating that he, “mit besonderem Zutrauen mich, wenn ich mich des Ausdrucks bedienen darf, gleichsam gelten ließ.”²¹ He was flattered when, in Weimar, he was decorated with the order of the French Legion of Honour on October 14, 1808, and by the Russian emperor with the St. Anna order a day later. But he kept his distance and was not naively enthusiastic as some historians insinuate.²² Napoleon wanted him to come to Paris and to write a Caesar tragedy for him; Goethe declined, said it was too “heikelig,” delicate,²³ and later on spoke of a Brutus tragedy that he had been asked to write.²⁴ He was fascinated by a mighty Napoleon who, seeing him for the first time, said: “Voilà un homme,” behold, a man;²⁵ but his distance is evident when he says in 1807 and keeps repeating over the years: “Außergewöhnliche Menschen, wie Napoleon, treten aus der Moralität heraus. Sie wirken zuletzt wie physische Ursachen, wie Feuer und Wasser.”²⁶ According to Falk’s report, far from being naïve, Goethe warned others: “Er verfolgt jedesmal einen Zweck, was ihm im Wege steht, wird niedergemacht, oder aus dem Wege geräumt, und wenn es sein leiblicher Sohn wäre.”²⁷ It is evident that Faust, world possessor in act 5, who orders Philemon and Baucis to be removed resulting in their accidental death, is modelled on Napoleon as Goethe saw him. He was certainly proud of the ribbons, stars and crosses that the two emperors fastened on his gala gown or, as Lady Stein put it, of the bit of incense that was burnt for him,²⁸ but he was definitely not less perceptive than the Duchess of Weimar who saw nothing but a scheme of cultural propaganda in Napoleon’s flattering of Goethe and Wieland. “Er weiß, daß sie in Deutschland großen Einfluß auf die öffentliche Meinung haben und daß nun alle Zeitungen von der Güte und dem Entgegenkommen Napoleons reden werden.”²⁹ Goethe knew well that he was being used for propaganda purposes, and he copied the emperor, cleverly using his influence for the common weal of the dukedom of Sachsen-Weimar and especially for the duke himself, as Talleyrand notes in his report.³⁰ As Napoleon did with him, so Goethe the politician made use of Napoleon as long as he was in power. This is a systemic approach, too, like the eye’s adaptation to light and the selection of certain qualities of light for human purposes. The relation was, on both sides, based on the cool analysts’ amazement at an absolutely extraordinary phenomenon: Napoleon’s for the poetic genius and wise man whom he used to ask: “Qu’en dit Mr. Göt?” what does Mr. Goethe say to that?³¹ Goethe’s for the man who could assert: “Was will man jetzt mit dem Schicksal? Politik ist das Schicksal!”³² Napoleon’s politics, of course.

Patriotism

Goethe was a politician, too, and so he carefully concealed his doubts about the duration and value of Napoleon's enterprise. But he engaged in a project that clearly counteracted Napoleon's intentions and counterpoised French nationalism: German cultural patriotism. This again is a systemic approach: If Napoleon appears to Goethe as the epitome of national egoism,³³ he can be counterbalanced only by cultural patriotism and trans-nationalism. The pupil of Herder who had devoted his work to an emancipation from biblical, Greek, Roman, French cultural dominance and to all-sided humanity as the national characteristic of the Germans, had begun to write the *Faust* that Lessing had recommended as the dearest myth of the Germans, had written *Götz von Berlichingen* and *Von deutscher Baukunst*. Goethe had ended *Herrmann und Dorothea* in 1797, in the middle of the coalition wars against France and the revolutionary propaganda of the French, with an appeal to the Germans to hold steadfastly their position and mental disposition without swaying here and there. Speaking to Dorothea, Herrmann concludes, at that time, with a concept of power against power:

Und drohen diesmal die Feinde
Oder künftig, so rüste mich selbst und reiche die Waffen.
Weiß ich durch dich nur versorgt das Haus und die liebenden Eltern,
O so stellt sich die Brust dem Feinde sicher entgegen.
Und gedächte jeder wie ich, so stünde die Macht auf
Gegen die Macht, und wir erfreuten uns alle des Friedens.”³⁴

The systemic idea of the balance of powers in Europe as the condition for peace is one of the main arguments of Friedrich Gentz against the dominant role of France in Europe. Gentz, friend of Wilhelm von Humboldt, Adam Müller, and Heinrich von Kleist in Berlin, was one of the most influential political writers in Germany. He fought against the ideas of the French Revolution with translations of the main antirevolutionary texts, e.g. Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, and by intensive journalistic work as a Prussian official from 1793–1802; from 1803 onward in Vienna, he continued in the same propagandistic work, became one of the most influential collaborators of Metternich, the political architect of Europe in the nineteenth century. Gentz sent to Goethe his *Fragments about the Recent History of the Balance of Powers in Europe* in April 1806, which Goethe studied. This was the year of the battle of Jena and Auerstedt in which Napoleon conquered Prussia. It was also the time when the ideas of a thorough reformation and renovation of the German states and societies became stronger with the reforms of Freiherr von Stein, Fichte's lectures on *Grundzüge des gegenwärtigen Zeitalters* (*Outlines of the Present Epoch*) given in Berlin, Erlangen, Königsberg, and most important Fichte's *Reden an die deutsche Nation* (*Speeches made to the German Nation*) of 1806/07. Goethe asked his friend Zelter in Berlin about those lectures and studied his extensive answer, but now he returned to the position that he had formulated already in 1795 (*Litterarischer Sansculottismus*) that Germany as a whole and a power did not and needed not to exist because it had no

political, social, spiritual centre. In multiple statements from 1806 onward, we see him less interested in the political unity of the Germans but in a culture of mutual recognition and patriotic cooperation. So, in 1807, he writes: "Wenn aber die Menschen über ein Ganzes jammern, das verloren sein soll, das denn doch in Deutschland kein Mensch sein Lebttag gesehen, noch viel weniger sich darum bekümmert hat; so muß ich meine Ungeduld verbergen, um nicht unhöflich zu werden."³⁵ But he supports everything that appears to work towards cultural and mental integration of the Germans, the "Kulturnation" which, for three quarters of the nineteenth century, proved to be a potent alternative to the nation states in Europe and which is, in itself an organic system, a political counterbalance to the "hell" of those national egoisms which Goethe foresaw: He speaks in high terms about Arnim's and Brentano's edition of *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* and even writes a favourable critique because here his joint enterprise of the 1770s with Herder of collecting folk songs is revived. He supports, from 1808 onward, Sulpiz Boisserée's propaganda for a restoration and completion of the Cathedral of Cologne because he himself had, with his essay on the Strasbourg Cathedral of 1770, done much to initiate the understanding for medieval architecture. To be sure, now, in 1808, he sees this Gothic style only as an offspring of Arabian art and is astonished about a German patriotism which would like to declare it an authentic German product instead of acknowledging its international character. Countering Goethe's initial scepticism, Boisserée succeeds in convincing him of the value of medieval art so thoroughly that he even writes an essay on *Art and Antiquity on the Rhine and Main*, and in 1815 hopes in a letter to Boisserée that "Und so müßte es nicht mit rechten Dingen zugehen, wenn der löbliche Zweck verfehlt würde, wenn unsere patriotischen Feuerchen, die wir auf so vielen Bergen und Hügeln des Rheins und Mains anzünden, nicht auch patriotische Gesinnungen erregen und glücklich fortwirken sollten."³⁶ Medieval and patriotic studies in literature show Goethe to be an avid reader of the *Nibelungenlied* that the editor von der Hagen, one of the first Germanists, had sent him in 1807, and he even reads it in weekly instalments to the participants of his "Wednesday Societies."³⁷ Niethammer, the Wilhelm von Humboldt of Bavaria, wins Goethe for a popular anthology of German lyric poetry in 1808; the plan cannot be realized but shows again Goethe's patriotic interest in everything that would give a common cultural consciousness to the Germans. That he is not only following others but willing to actively organize the formation of a German culture and the consciousness of it becomes apparent in his plan for a cultural conference in competition with the political conference of the monarchs in Erfurt, 1808. The historian Woltmann, a good friend of Goethe's, wrote in September, 1808: "Herr von Goethe trägt sich mit der Idee, in dem bevorstehenden Winter einen Kongreß ausgezeichneter deutscher Männer in Weimar zustande zu bringen, damit sie über Gegenstände der deutschen Kultur gemeinschaftlich sich beraten."³⁸ Naturally, such an enterprise would never have gotten the support, not even the permission of Napoleon who suppressed the individual character of peoples he had conquered. If one takes Goethe's position and even initiative into account, especially from 1808 onward, one can believe the historian Luden who, after Napoleon had been defeated in 1813, held a long discussion

with Goethe on the ideas of patriotism and then tried to dispel all critique about his public silence in all these years:³⁹ in his exposed position, Goethe the patriot had, in political respects, been restricted to cooperation with the powers in order to prevent as much harm and destruction and to gain as much benefit as possible for Sachsen-Weimar, the Grand-Duke, and the Germans. But, convinced that the mind of the Germans had to be changed before they would be prepared for political unity, he worked indefatigably on two cultural projects: a project of collective memory for the Germans, *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, which he planned in 1808 and began writing in 1809, and a project of mental training for organic or systemic thinking that he had learned from Herder⁴⁰ and had, for himself, formulated in his essay *Experiment as a Mediator between Subject and Object*, in 1792.

Systems Theory of History and Nature: Formulae of Helena

As for the project of collective memory, he wrote in 1806: “Seit der großen Lücke, die durch Schillers Tod in mein Dasein gefallen ist, bin ich lebhafter auf das Andenken der Vergangenheit hingewiesen, und empfinde gewissermaßen leidenschaftlich, welche Pflicht es ist, das was für ewig verschwunden scheint, in der Erinnerung aufzubewahren.”⁴¹ In this letter, he urges the painter Fritz Hackert to write his autobiography. From 1810 onward, when he wrote a plan for *Dichtung und Wahrheit* and published three volumes from 1811 to 1814, adding *Italianische Reise* and *Campagne in Frankreich*, he worked on this biography of the epoch until 1831. Each book, as he said, was to have a different character and style and should thereby exert a specific effect on the reader. “Bei der Art, wie ich die Sache behandle, mußte notwendig die Wirkung erscheinen, daß jeder der das Büchlein liest, mit Gewalt auf sich und seine jüngern Jahre zurückgeführt wird.”⁴² Already here, Goethe sees himself as a “collective being,” nothing but an eminent case in the history of his time. *Dichtung und Wahrheit* is not just a book of personal recollections, and it is not written just for Goethe’s public appearance but, as he confessed: “Aufrichtig zu sagen, ist es der größte Dienst, den ich glaube meinem Vaterlande leisten zu können, wenn ich fortfahre, in meinem biographischen Versuche die Umwandlungen der sittlichen, ästhetischen, philosophischen Kultur, insofern ich Zeuge davon gewesen, mit Billigkeit und Heiterkeit darzustellen, und zu zeigen, wie immer eine Folgezeit die vorhergehende zu verdrängen und aufzuheben suchte, statt ihr für Anregung, Mitteilung und Überlieferung zu danken.”⁴³ From this quote we can see that *Dichtung und Wahrheit* is not just an autobiography but a history of the decades since Goethe’s childhood in Frankfurt, seen by a witness, analyzed and interpreted by a cultural historian and deep-thinking contemporary. And by a poet, as the title says, for instance with the artistic arrangement, in the fifth book, of the emperor’s election with its painful masquerades and the Gretchen story that opens the view “in die seltsamen Irrgänge . . . , mit welchen die bürgerliche Sozietät unterminiert ist.”⁴⁴ The systemic constellation of the two events in one book sheds light on both of them.

This method of constellating different but structurally related events or elements, however, is nothing but the historic aspect of the second project that opens up the realm of Goethe's natural philosophy and philosophy of history. Both philosophies are one with Goethe and his teacher Herder. In his *Ideas Concerning the Philosophy of the History of Humanity*, Herder begins with natural history and gradually builds up to human history. The method in both is systemic, that is, Herder looks upon the cosmos, the earth, the life spheres of plants, animals, and man as organic systems in which the elements necessitate each other and where the systems always tend to a maximum, that is, a balance of powers, and attempts to restore that balance after a disturbance. While natural science works under the illusion of objectivity without taking into account that the instruments by which it gets its results are built under the condition of subjective interests and purposes, this systemic approach to nature always includes the study of the relation between the elements and the investigating human who operates as one of these elements. This non-objective approach is already present in the title of the essay on *Experiment as Mediator between Subject and Object* that Goethe wrote in the context of his first publication on colors; the systemic approach guides him in his *Theory of Colors* which is printed between 1805 and 1810. Goethe was convinced that it was a disaster in Newtonian physics to separate the experiment from the human participant who, of course, modifies everything to himself in order to assimilate it.⁴⁵ This was already Herder's view in his treatise *On the Origin of Language* of which Goethe was the first reader in 1770. Until today, Goethe has not been able to convince physicists that the instruments they use are specific forms of modification and assimilation to human purposes to which for instance the phenomenon of light is subjected. Beauty, the complementary systemic cooperation between eye and sunlight which we discussed earlier simply does not exist for Newtonian physics or is a "deception of the eye" as Goethe has Faust's assistant Wagner say when they observe a fiery after-image following the black poodle who is in fact Mephistopheles. Systems theory guides Goethe in his theory of light and colors: I quoted already the verse rendering Plotinus' teaching that the eye has sun's nature. Herder, with whom Goethe worked together on the first books of the *Ideas*, extended Plotinus' idea into evolution theory, the systemic-organic thought that light stimulates the body of an animal species to develop a light-sensitive organ if it needs visible orientation in its life-sphere, and that in turn this organ receives light in a form modified according to the organ; an example discovered much later is ultra-violet light that bees are able to see. Like Herder, Goethe keeps the old Persian and hermetic metaphysics of light and darkness as the two contrary powers in cosmos; the colors originate for him when pure invisible light passes through turbid media. When he states that "ich meine Farbenwelt aus Licht und Finsternis zusammensetzte,"⁴⁶ he shows that he is well aware of his subjective contribution which the systemic approach necessitates in the theory itself. Goethe's only mistake in this matter was that he tried to convince the Newtonians and to be polemic with them. His passionate zeal, however, may be understood because, to him, they killed Helena, the beauty of the sensual world.

What was most important for him was the confirmation of the “grand formula” in his theory of colors and not only there but also in the theory of music which he urged the musician Zelter to construct according to the same principle. “Wenn [Zelter] ein paar gute Formeln glücken, so muß das alles Eins werden, alles aus Einem entspringen und zu Einem zurückkehren.”⁴⁷ This is the old neo-Platonic formula of *μονή, προοδός, ἐπιστροφή*, the One remaining in itself, coming forward into the multitude of the creation, and returning into unification. Spinoza, key philosopher for Herder, Goethe, and Hölderlin, had immobilized this formula with his correlation of substance and modi; Herder dynamized it and restored the traditional triad enriching it by the “systematology” developed by Johann Heinrich Lambert.

The systemic concept of “grand formula” constitutes Goethe’s main interest in the decades after 1800, in history with *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, as we have seen, in natural philosophy not only with the theory of light, darkness, and colors or between this theory and music, but also in respect to clouds, climate, geography of plants, mineralogy and morphology of animals. He wrote essays in many of these fields and corresponded with the foremost scientists. There are several reasons for this eagerness: (1) The disciplines and methods of scientific research began to diverge more and more, so that the unity of nature was endangered along with the unity of science. (2) On the other hand, a theory of physical chemistry like Berzelius’ thesis of 1812 that chemical combinations are held together by electricity or the detection of metallic elements by electrolysis (Humphrey Davy in 1807) showed (3) the need for a unifying theory or formula. Formula, at that time, designated a schema, an essential form which, once found, would transform into one “collective entity” all the diverse sciences, history, society and man himself. Beside Goethe, Romantic scientists and philosophers like Novalis, Schelling, Baader, Ritter, Oken were working in the same encyclopaedic direction. In his studies on the history of the Theory of Colors, Goethe came across Francis Bacon several times whom he did not cherish for his empiricist method but whom the revered philosopher Hamann had quoted with a maxim that also guided Goethe: “Magic dealt primarily with the observation of natural and civil things as far as they symbolize each other.—And these are not mere similarities (as it may seem to less perspicacious people), but clearly the footsteps and characters of one and the same Nature, impressed into different matters and subjects.”⁴⁸ This is the theory behind Goethe’s novel *Die Wahlverwandtschaften*, The Elective Affinities, written in 1808/09, in which he said he had hidden quite a lot of correlations and which he termed “offenbares Geheimnis,” patent secret, like a work of nature herself.⁴⁹ The tragic novel poses the question whether nature can and should be looked at under an anthropomorphic perspective, whether humans are just nature and whether civil morals disturb the organic processes in human nature. Goethe drew a comparison with the theory of colors several times; both works document the systemic approach and the problem of the grand formula. His historical studies, on the other hand, taught him in connection with the history of color theory and with his autobiography that systems and formulae must be conceived dynamically, so that “Gestaltung, Umgestaltung

/ Des ewigen Sinnes ewige Unterhaltung," (6287) formation, transformation, eternal entertainment of eternal sense, becomes Goethe's maxim. One of the most important changes from antiquity into modernity which he had reflected upon with Herder's *Shakespeare* essay of 1771 and which he took up with his essay *Shakespeare and no ending* of 1813, was decisive in his attitude towards the idealistic philosophy of his time and Romantic literature and art in general which loosened and severed the ties between fairy tale and hard reality. Looking back upon the chaotic years up to the defeat of Napoleon in 1814, he writes: "Der unselige Krieg und die fremde Herrschaft hatten alles verwirrt und zum Starren

gebracht. . . . Zugleich ward eine höhere ideelle Behandlung immer mehr von dem Wirklichen getrennt, durch ein Transzendieren, und Mystifizieren, wo das Hohle vom Gehaltvollen nicht mehr zu unterscheiden ist, und jedes Urbild, das Gott der menschlichen Seele verliehen hat, sich in Traum und Nebel verschweben muß."⁵⁰ In particular: "Bei den Alten, in ihrer besten Zeit, entsprang das Heilige aus dem sinnlich faßbaren Schönen. . . . Das Moderne ruht auf dem sittlich Schönen, dem, wenn man will, das sinnliche entgegensteht."⁵¹ Sensual beauty, moral beauty, thus, are two formulae for the collective entities of antique and modern culture. Goethe's quest for the unifying systemic classical-romantic grand formula that, for him, holds together history, politics, natural philosophy, and poetic work, must needs direct his continuation of *Faust* as well.

Faust Part Two

With the formula of beauty, we have come back full circle to *Faust* and Helena, and we can be brief, merely completing the lines we have begun to draw. In 1800, Goethe had begun writing *Helena in the Middle Ages. Satyric Drama, episode to Faust*. When he complained that he had to caricature Helena, Schiller answered that he should not shrink back from "barbarizing" Helena which meant, in Schiller's terminology, to make her dominated by thought, idea, and reason, at the same time taking away her sensual beauty.⁵² This is exactly what happens in act 3 of part two where Helena is chased through 3,000 years from the war of Troy to Byron's death in 1824, through fragments of antique tragedy, medieval chivalry drama, and eighteenth-century operetta, losing more and more the sensual-spiritual-divine totality of her beauty. At the end of act 3 we find her rhyming, singing, timorous, a Rococo damsel who describes a family as the relation of one, two, three or mine, yours, his. Here, we have the outcome of this tragic process of barbarization effected by Faust's attempt to pull the ideal of beauty into his life. Act 3 is a stage play on the *Faust* stage. Helena leaves the fragment of a Greek tragedy after Mephistopheles has forced modern consciousness of identity on her. And at the end, she leaves the operetta and follows to Hades her son Euphorion who, escaping from the Romantic fairytale realm of Arcadia wants to meet reality, and meets death. What remains to Faust, at the beginning of act 4, is "Seelenschönheit," moral beauty, and even that leaves him, rises to the ether, and carries off Faust's innermost soul. Then comes Hell.

So, the beginning of the Helena episode, 269 verses that Goethe had written in 1800, implicitly contained the loss of sensual beauty and reality in the world after 1800, implied by the idea of barbarization, and the plan for a stage play on the *Faust* stage conforming to Goethe's insight that idea and experience can never meet but in art and in action, suggested by the idea of a satiric drama.⁵³ In the final concept of *Faust II* which Goethe planned in a first draft in 1816 and worked out from 1825 onward, Faust has to pay with his biological life for this insight because, in act 1, after seeing the slides of Helena and Paris which he projects, in his erotic madness he wants to establish the double realm of reality and idea (6555) and tries to throw Paris out of the film with his red-hot key. An explosion follows that takes the power to breathe from him as he had vowed to himself if he should fall back from the pure idea of beauty (6493-94) which, even more explicitly systemic than elsewhere in the text, is composed by Helena's visible image and "tief im Sinn Der Schönheit Quelle" (6487). Indeed, he falls back when he wants to possess this idea like a real woman. In act 2, "Classical Walpurgis Night," Faust is a spiritual existence and becomes a mythological demigod who internalizes all the great mythological heroes of antiquity in order to meet Helena on the level of mythology. He develops poetic faculties and, hearing that the poets had used the mythological woman according to their needs, he proposes to use her as a poetess of herself (7428-34) who, in the stage play of act 3, can cooperate with Faust and Mephistopheles as a poetess with two poets, a stage directress with two stage directors, an actress with two actors in order to race through 3000 years of assimilation of Helena to modernity, that is, the barbarization and destruction of the idea of divine sensual beauty.

All these Romantic spiritual adventures take place in the "historical" world of the emperor whom Mephistopheles and Faust, by the invention of paper money, save from bankruptcy. We can observe here that Goethe uses the grand formula in projecting the late medieval sell-off of the German Empire by Charles IV on to the paper money sell-off of the Austrian Empire and French state which had to pay for the endless wars from 1792 to 1814. Moreover, the formula is used for those lifeless Helena slides in act 1, too, that Faust steals from the Mothers: Mephistopheles protests that she cannot be produced as easily as the "Papiergespenst der Gulden" (v. 6197 f.). And just as people take paper money for real value, Faust takes the Helena slides for reality. In each of the acts of *Faust II*, we have such a grand formula as a key for systemic historical constellations; think for instance of the three giants of aggressiveness, avidity, and avarice taken from the Old Testament, fighting a late medieval battle between Charles IV and Günther von Schwarzburg, and the wars between France and Austria between 1792 and 1814.

These giants come directly from Hell which according to Mephistopheles' interpretation of the French Revolution has been turned downside up so that Faust, at the beginning of act 4, lands on the top of a mountain which had previously been the deepest point in Dante's Hell. Climbing down the mountain, Mephistopheles takes with him "Bergvolk," mountain people, masses of condemned inhabitants of hell who coagulate into the giants but dissolve

into masses again when Mephistopheles makes them fight for the emperor or, in act 5, gain the possession of the world for Faust under Mephisto's command by "Krieg, Handel und Piraterie," war, commerce, and piracy, the hellish trinity that they worship (11187 f.) So, after Helena vanishes, after complete and sensual beauty has been barbarized into moral beauty that pulls the innermost out of Faust, this despicable ruin of a person becomes the ruler of a hellish world that is characterized by aggressive, greedy and avaricious masses. Goethe had experienced those masses during the wars and had fled from them geographically and culturally into the poems of the *Western-Eastern Divan*, where he tried to find the grand formula for systems of cultures and their understanding. But there was around him a hellish world characterized by capitalism, imperialism, and exploitation of nature, peoples and cultures that he depicts in the last two acts of *Faust*. In this play, Goethe anticipates the computer and the artificial production of life and human beings (6869–70, 6990–94), and he anticipates future life as the hell which Faust builds up with his demonic helpers and governs with ruthless violence. As Wilhelm Böhm put it, Faust is a super-criminal in the last two acts. That he can save himself is, in complete irony, due to the fact that the astute lawyer has a means to overcome Mephistopheles, and that in heaven the ruling master of the beginning is not to be found any more, his place being taken by a goddess who changed all the rules that the old master had set up. Woman's rule: that is also one of the anticipations of that wise old collective being called Goethe, and evidently he set all his hopes upon the restoration of beauty by this "Höchste Herrscherin der Welt" who not only is "rein im schönsten Sinn" (with the ambivalence of "sense" and "meaning" in "Sinn") but in whose neighborhood man, ravished by this beauty, becomes "schön und groß" again (11987, 12009). If, in the historical development of modernity since Faust's lifetime in the sixteenth century, male striving and pushing has severed Helena's sensual-spiritual beauty, creating a hellish world dominated by aggressive, avaricious, greedy masses and their devilish manipulators, Goethe's hopes are now focused upon a new form of beauty repaired by the systemic love between the ruling principle of female attraction and the principle of male aspiration of which the last lines speak: "Das Ewig-Weibliche Zieht uns hinan" (12111).

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NOTES

1. *Goethes Briefe*, edited by Robert Mandelkow and Bodo Morawe (Hamburg: Beck, 1965) HABr 3:309: "You should start in a significant epoch and from there work backward and forward; what is true can be exalted and conserved only by its history; what is false can be humiliated and dispelled only by its history."

2. Johann Gottfried Herder, *Werke in 10 Bänden*, edited by Günter Arnold et al. (Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1985–2002) 1:432–55.

3. Johann Wolfgang Goethe, *Werke*, edited by Erich Trunz (Hamburg: Beck, 1956) 12:226.

4. Cf. Goethe's thesis in his doctoral examination: "Man soll kein allgemeines Gesetzbuch herstellen." Discussed in E. Keetmann, "Götz, die Frucht des straßburger juristischen Studiums Goethe," *Juristische Wochenschrift* 61, Heft 12 (1932): 853–54.

5. Johann Heinrich Lambert, *Texte zur Systematologie*, edited by Geo Siegwart (Hamburg: Meiner, 1988); Ulrich Gaier, "Herders Systemtheorie," *Allgemeine Zeitschrift für Philosophie* 23 (1988): 4–17; Ulrich Gaier, "Herders systematologische Theologie," *Johann Gottfried Herder: Aspekte seines Lebenswerks*, edited by Martin Kessler and Volker Leppin (Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2005) 203–18; Stefan Metzger, *Die Konjektur des Organismus. Wahrscheinlichkeitsdenken und Performanz im späten 18. Jahrhundert* (München: Fink, 2002) 65–259 (dealing with Lambert and Herder).

6. Wilhelm Böhm, *Faust der Nichtfaustische* (Halle: Niemeyer, 1933) 29, 64.

7. Ulrich Gaier, *Johann Wolfgang Goethe Faust-Dichtungen*, vol. 3 Kommentar II. (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1999) 439–55.

8. "Helena is one of my earliest concepts, simultaneous with Faust." To Sulpiz Boisserée, Oct. 22, 1826 (HABr 4:207).

9. "But don't allow such melancholy mood to spoil the beautiful good of this hour. Consider how, surrounded by a green halo, the shacks glimmer in the glowing evening sun" (1068–71).

10. Cf. Albrecht Schöne, *Goethes Farbentheologie* (München: Beck, 1987) 98–100.

11. HA 13:324: "Only through the sun-like nature of the eye are we capable of seeing light. If the proper energy of divinity did not live in us, we could not be delighted by the divine."

12. Plotin, *Enneades* I 6.

13. To Schiller, August 16, 1797; HABr 2:297–98.

14. "When I will ask from the moment: Stay, please, you are so beautiful! Then you may fetter me, then I will gladly die" (1699–1702).

15. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Les rêveries du promeneur solitaire*, éd. par Jacques Voisine (Paris: Garnier-Flammarion, 1964) 101.

16. "The most beautiful image of a woman! Is it possible, is woman as beautiful as that? Must I see in this prostrate body the epitome of all heavens? Is there such a thing on earth?" (2436–40).

17. "You will, with this potion in your body, see a Helena in any woman whatsoever." (2603–4).

18. "By heaven, this child is beautiful!" (2609).

19. "Highest appearance which was possible in history . . . One denies to oneself this monstrosity as long as possible, and one refuses to oneself a correct insight into the details that constitute it. But when one listens to an ingenuous description of this emperor and his entourage one certainly sees that there was never anything like it at any time nor will be likely in the future." To Knebel, Jan. 3, 1807 HABr 3:39–40.

20. "compendium of world history." Quote in Edwin Redslob, *Goethes Begegnung mit Napoleon* (Baden-Baden: Verlag für angewandte Wissenschaft, 1954) 23.

21. "with exquisite confidence, if I may use the expression, in a way, he acknowledged my value." To Cotta, Dec. 2, 1808, HABr 3:92.

22. Wilhelm Mommsen, *Die politischen Anschauungen Goethes* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1948) 132–33: "Goethe, der allen politisch führenden Persönlichkeiten mit einer gewissen Naivität gegenübertrat, hat offensichtlich nicht das Zweckhafte empfunden, das dieser Empfang für Napoleon besaß. Wieland, dessen Gespräch mit

dem Kaiser sehr viel eindringlicher war als das zwischen Goethe und Napoleon in Erfurt, hat wohl stärker empfunden, daß dieser Empfang ein gut Teil Kulturpropaganda des Kaisers war."

23. Redslob (n. 20) 38.

24. To Kirms, June 26, 1810, HABr 3:129.

25. Redslob (n. 20) 20.

26. "Extraordinary men, like Napoleon, step out of morality. After all, they have the effect of physical causes, like fire and water." Friedrich Wilhelm Riemer, *Mitteilungen über Goethe*, Aufgrund der Ausgabe von 1841 und des handschriftlichen Nachlasses hrsg. von Arthur Pollmer (Leipzig: Insel, 1921) 268.

27. "He does nothing without purpose. What is in his way will be cut down or set aside, albeit his own son." Redslob (n. 20) 36.

28. Redslob (n. 20) 41.

29. "He knows that they exert a great influence on public opinion in Germany and that all newspapers will now be full of praise for the grace and courtesy of Napoleon." Redslob (n. 20) 41.

30. Redslob (n. 20) 25.

31. Redslob (n. 20) 47.

32. "Why do people now care about fate? Politics is fate!" Redslob (n. 20) 27.

33. Gaier, *Faust-Dichtungen* 3 (n. 7) 855 (to Eckermann, March 21, 1831).

34. "When enemies threaten now or in the future, you arm me and tender me the weapons. As long as I know that the house and the loving parents are cared for by you, my breast bravely encounters the enemy. And if everybody would think as I do, power would rise against power, and we all could enjoy peace" (HA 2:514).

35. "When people complain about the pretended loss of a totality which, in Germany, nobody has seen in his lifetime, much less has cared about it, I have to hide my impatience in order not to appear impolite." To Zelter, July 27, 1807, HABr 3:47.

36. "And so it would be strange if the laudable purpose would be missed and our patriotic little fires which we are lighting on so many mountains and hills of the Rhine and Main would not arouse patriotic convictions and have favourable consequences." To Boisserée, Oct 23, 1815, HABr 3:327.

37. HABr 3:57, 94.

38. "Mr. von Goethe plans to organize a congress of excellent German personalities in Weimar this coming winter for a common consultation on matters of German culture." Redslob (n. 20) 45.

39. Redslob (n. 20) 59.

40. Cf. note 5.

41. "The great gap in my existence caused by Schiller's death makes me recollect the past more vividly, and I feel a kind of passion about preserving in memory what seems bygone forever." To Fritz Hackert, April 4, 1806, HABr 3:20.

42. "The manner in which I treat these things must needs produce the effect that each reader of the booklet is carried by force back to himself and to his early years." To Reinhard, Feb 13, 1812, HABr 3:175.

43. "Frankly speaking, it is to my mind the greatest service I can render to my country if, in my biographical essay, I go on representing with equity and serenity the changes of moral, aesthetic, philosophical culture as far as I witnessed them, and to show how

always a following time sought to suppress and annihilate the preceding one instead of being grateful to it for stimulation, communication, and tradition." To Buchholtz, Feb 14, 1814, HABr 3:257.

44. "Into the strange channels by which bourgeois society is undermined" (HA 9:285).

45. "Und das ist eben das größte Unheil der neuern Physik daß man die Experimente gleichsam vom Menschen abgesondert hat, und bloß in dem was künstliche Instrumente zeigen die Natur erkennen, ja was sie leisten kann dadurch beschränken und beweisen will. . . . Ja, man kann sagen, was sind die elementaren Erscheinungen der Natur selbst gegen den Menschen, der sie alle erst bändigen und modifizieren muß, um sie sich einigermaßen assimilieren zu können?" To Zelter, June 22, 1808, HABr 3:76.

46. To Windischmann, Dec 28, 1812, HABr 3:219.

47. "If he succeeds in finding some grand formulae, then all that [namely nature as a whole, the theory of music, and the theory of colors] must become One, all things originate from One and return to One." To Sartorius, July 19, 1810, HABr 3:130f.

48. MAGIA in eo potissimum versabatur, vt architecturas & fabricas rerum naturalium & ciuiliū symbolisantes notaret—Nec similitudines merae sunt (quales hominibus fortasse parum perspicacibus videri possint) sed plane vna eademque naturae vestigia aut signacula diversis materiis & subiectis impressa. Quoted from Bacon *De augmentis scientiarum* [Works, ed. Spedding I 542], in Johann Georg Hamann, *Sokratische Denkwürdigkeiten: Aesthetica in nuce*, edited by Sven-Aage Jørgensen (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1968) 129.

49. HABr 3:104f.

50. "The fatal war and the foreign rule had messed up and paralyzed everything, [...] a higher idealistic treatment had been separated more and more from reality by a tendency to transcend and mystify, where emptiness and plenitude cannot be distinguished any more, and where all prototypes that God has planted into the human soul must vanish in dream and fog." To Schlosser, Nov. 25, 1814, HABr 3:283.

51. "With the Ancients, in their best epoch, the divine originated from beauty that could be grasped sensually. [...] Modernity is grounded in moral beauty, if you wish in opposition to sensuality." To Jacobi, March 7, 1808, HABr 3:66.

52. Quotes and discussion in Ulrich Gaier, *Fausts Modernität, Essays* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2000) 57–91.

53. "Idee und Erfahrung werden in der Mitte nie zusammentreffen, zu vereinigen sind sie nur durch Kunst und Tat." To Schopenhauer, Jan 28, 1816, HABr 3:340.